

## Official rules and regulations 2025 MNBF Juniors TOC

**PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:** This tournament is open only to members in good standing of a MNBF Junior Federation that is in good standing with the state federation and are 8th grade or younger that are able to cast, tie their own knots and put on their own lures are able to participate. This is a team event, contestants must meet eligibility requirements as set forth for State, and National Tournaments rules as follows to advance to the National competition:

Only anglers that are 8th grade and under on or before the start of 2025-2026 school year can participate.

The Minnesota Bass Federation (MNBF) will send the winners from the Junior State Championship to the FLW Junior World Championship in 2026.

### REGISTRATION AND TOURNAMENT DATES:

Registration will be online [www.mnbass.org](http://www.mnbass.org) youth page

Proof of age will be required for the anglers advancing onto the Jr World Championship

The Junior Anglers and a Parent, or Guardian are required to attend a meeting before the tournament for a tournament briefing, which will include a rules review and Boat Captains meeting.

1.) EACH PARTICIPANT (Team) AGREES TO REPORT TO THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR ANY VIOLATION OR INFRACTION OF THESE TOURNAMENT RULES. THE FAILURE TO REPORT VIOLATIONS OR SUGGESTIONS TO VIOLATE THESE RULES OR FALSE VERIFICATION OF WEIGH-IN FORMS WILL BE CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION. EACH PARTICIPANT AGREES TO SUBMIT, BY THEIR SIGNATURE ON THIS DOCUMENT.

2.) SAFETY: Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by all participants, competitors, observers and Boat Captains. During the official practice and during the tournament, anyone in a tournament boat, is required to wear a Coast Guard approved, Type III, or greater chest-type life preserver (state or country laws will apply) when the combustion engine is operating (no inflatable PFD's for youth anglers). This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition at all times while the combustion engine is running. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification. Tournament officials have the right to delay or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather. ALL PERSONS IN A TOURNAMENT BOAT SHALL REMAIN SEATED WITH THEIR FEET RESTING ON THE MAIN FLOOR OF THE BOAT WHEN THE COMBUSTION ENGINE IS RUNNING. SITTING ON PEDESTAL SEATS WHILE THE COMBUSTION ENGINE IS IN OPERATION IS NOT PERMITTED. VIOLATION OF THIS RULE SHALL BE REASON FOR IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION.

3.) SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those

purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any participant during the official practice or during the tournament or during the weigh-in will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future MNBF tournaments. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of noncompetitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a participant which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification. All competitors are bound by prevailing state or country statutes and regulations of the various waters within which they fish. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during official practice or competition day or when in the weigh-in area. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and for disqualification. Any disqualification or suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding, any tournament or fishing organization, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and for disqualification.

4.) TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: Only artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted, with the exception of pork rinds, strips, etc. Only ONE casting, spin-casting or spinning rod (8-foot maximum length from butt of the handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All other types are prohibited. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional and sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day's catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bass, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by the Boat Captain before unhooked to be counted as a legal fish. NETS ARE ALLOWED. Bass may not be "stringered" at any time. No gaffs OR "Grippers" may be used to boat bass nor be permitted in the boat at any time.

5.) BOAT AND MOTOR: For the safety of all contestants, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH. This ignition kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Anytime the combustion engine is operating the Boat Captain must be in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats may be used that are 16 feet in length or longer. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. A small electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering; however, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. All BLADDER tanks and any other type of AUXILIARY gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by an authorized dealer are legal. Boats that do not have factory installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks that meet U.S. Coast Guard regs. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat. Under no circumstances shall a competitor be allowed to "store" additional gas on the bank or anywhere else for use in a tournament boat. No "barges" or similar cumbersome craft will be permitted.

6.) BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: Every boat must have all the required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and LIVEWELL SPACE, PROPERLY AERATED, TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE A LIMIT CATCH OF BASS BY BOTH COMPETITORS USING THE BOAT. Tournament Director shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate" and whether the boat meets all safety requirements set forth.

7.) BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Each boat MUST be given, prior to the day's start, an inspection check by a tournament official, Also a boat marker, number tag which MUST remain on in the boat. Boat Captains are responsible for turning in all numbered tags at official checkpoints so officials can account for all boats.

8.) BOAT OPERATION: The Boat Captain has sole discretion to veto any location for safety reasons. The Junior anglers may operate the trolling motor if the Boat Captain deems they are competent to do so. BOAT CAPTAINS MUST BE 21 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER. BOAT CAPTAINS MAY NOT FISH. THEY ARE THERE TO PROVIDE ONLY TRANSPORTATION AND ASSIST THE JUNIOR ANGLERS IN EMERGENCY. THEY SHALL BE ALLOWED TO ASSIST WITH FISHING LOCATIONS, BAIT SELECTION, AND LOANING OF EQUIPMENT OR BAITS. THEY SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BAIT THE LINE, TIE KNOTS, CAST OUT THE ROD, SET THE HOOK, BRING FISH TO THE BOAT. THE BOATER MAY NET THE FISH FOR THE CONTESTANT IF THE CONTESTANT ASKS. THE BOATER MAY HELP WITH HOOK REMOVAL IF THEY CONSIDER IT A HAZARDOUS SITUATION.

9.) PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for this tournament and will be posted on [www.mnbass.org](http://www.mnbass.org) website junior page. Each participant must obtain this information. This will also be reviewed during the rules meeting the night before the tournament. Fishing on Tournament waters is permitted anywhere except within the defined area: within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position WITH THE TROLLING MOTOR OUT OF THE WATER. The anchored boat has a responsibility to inform other competitors' boats when they have entered the 50-yard circle claimed by him. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50-yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor. Any water within these boundaries posted "off-limits or no fishing" by state or federal agencies will be OFF-LIMITS. No contestant may "Buy" or "Barter" a fishing location. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. Any water closed to public fishing will be closed to these tournament contestants. All angling must be done from the boat.

10.) CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT: Participants must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Participants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. All participants must remain in the boat at all times except in case of dire emergency. In such an emergency, both competitors may be removed from their boat to: A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT. The momentary condition of being out of sight of each other for restroom breaks is permitted. Otherwise, Competitors must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch under the

conditions cited above, in order for their catch of that day to be counted. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions (to use a phone to report an emergency or breakdown) both competitors must cease fishing at this point, and their catch must be verified by a tournament official in order to be counted in the tournament. If after the emergency situation is resolved by tournament officials and enough time is left to resume fishing, a RESTART will be allowed and the competitors will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations. Trailing of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of the Tournament Director.

11.) OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT: There shall be an official checkpoint for checkout in the morning and check-in in the afternoon and this point shall be designated at the tournament briefing. At the time of check-out all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director; at check-in all boats shall identify themselves and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together, through check-in and weigh-in. YOU MUST CHECK-IN EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FISH.

12.) SCORING: Only Largemouth and Smallmouth will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species that day per team. At no time shall a team have in possession more than the tournament limit. Tournament Officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision, and in the event a team has in their possession more than the stated limit, shall cull, starting with the largest bass first, etc., down to the stated limit. The official minimum length for bass is 12 inches. Only bass which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed-in. Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length shall accrue penalties at the rate of one pound for each legal bass. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled, or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. After a competitor checks in at the official checkpoint he MUST present all fish in his possession to tournament officials to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a competitor's catch has been measured, counted or verified by a tournament official, that contestant may not return to his boat until his catch has been weighed and recorded. Bass must not be stringered at any time during the tournament.

13.) CULLING OF FISH: If it becomes necessary for a team to cull their day's catch, every effort must be made by the competitor to handle his or her own fish. Competitors cannot cull a dead fish. State laws may prevail. DON'T KILL YOUR CATCH: Each team is expected to keep their bass alive by use of a properly aerated livewell. Only Non-Piercing cull tags maybe used on fish

14.) PENALTY POINTS: For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized EIGHT (8) ounces of weight, to be deducted from their daily score. The Tournament Director shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points.

15.) LATE PENALTY: Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute to be deducted from the total weight of their catch that day, including any "Lunker Award" for each one

minute they are late. Any competitors more than 10 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case will a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time". After proper recognition at the check-in point, competitors will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site; however, all fishing must stop upon check-in. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except during tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the tournament briefing.

16.) TIES: In case of a tie the following tie breakers will be used in order: 1.) The Team with the largest number of legal fish weighed-in during the competition; 2.) The team with the largest fish weighed-in during the competition; 3.) In the unlikely event that teams remain tied after these tiebreakers are employed; then a flip of a coin will be used to determine the winner(s).

17.) PAIRING OF CONTESTANTS: This is a team event and anglers must bring their own boat captain. Two youth anglers per boat is required.

18.) Nothing in the above rules shall prohibit a MNBF tournament official from approaching or boarding a competitor's boat at any time during the official tournament. During the MNBF Junior tournament or State Championship tournament, parents, guardians, or sponsors will maintain a 50 yard distance from all competitors. Parents, guardians, or sponsors, who are boaters that day are exempt only from the 50 yard distance. Passing in a channel is not allowed. No communication with any of the junior anglers is allowed during the tournament hours except by tournament officials. Failure to maintain the specified distance or communication could result in a disqualification of the junior angler of that parent, guardian, or sponsor in violation.